

Remarks to the Community in Louisville, Kentucky

September 5, 2002

Thank you all very much. Thank you all. It is great to be here in the State of Kentucky. Let me tell you, it's great to be back to the State of Kentucky. I want to thank you all for coming. It is my—it's going to be my honor today to talk to you about our country, our future. I want to talk about how to make our country a safer country and a stronger country and, as importantly, a better country. And there's no better place to do it than Louisville, Kentucky.

I want to thank Anne for her kind introduction, and I want to thank the other members of the Kentucky delegation who are here today who are my friends, and that would be Senator Jim Bunning and Congressman Ken Lucas. I appreciate all three members of the congressional delegation coming down today. As you know, they're up there in Washington meeting, and it's an honor that three Members decided to come and hear the President. *[Laughter]*

I want to thank you Governor, Paul Patton, for coming today. Governor, I appreciate you taking time to be here. I'm honored that you're here. I want to thank Elaine Chao, who is a member of my Cabinet, the Secretary of Labor. I appreciate you coming, Elaine. I want to thank the head of the Small Business Administration, Hector Barreto, for joining us as well. Thank you, Hector. Oh, I forgot—I forgot to mention the first lady of Kentucky. One thing you learn is never to forget to mention the first ladies. I appreciate Judi Patton being here as well. Thank you for coming, Judi.

Speaking about first ladies, my wife is doing great, too. I like to remind people that when I married her, she was a public school librarian. And for all the public school librarians out there, you've got an advocate in the White House. For all the teachers out there, I want to thank you for being teachers, too. She didn't like politics, and she didn't like politicians when I married her. Now she's stuck with one. *[Laughter]* She's doing a great job. I'm really proud of her. She sends her love and her best to all the people of Kentucky.

I want to thank the members of the Louisville community who happen to be small-business owners for coming to visit. We just had a good hour discussion about small-business issues. You see, one of the best ways to make sure that our economy grows is to have an environment in which the entrepreneur can flourish and the small business can be strong. Most new jobs are created in America by small businesses, and therefore, we'd better worry about the health of small businesses, if we're worried about the health and security of the country.

And I'm worried about the health and security of our country; I am. And we've got a lot of work to do. I'm not worried about our future because I'm optimistic about America. We've got a great future ahead of us. But so long as anybody who wants to work can't find work, I think we've got a problem in America. And so, therefore, our thought process ought to be how to create jobs, how best to make sure that the foundation of economic growth remains strong and that we go forward with creating jobs.

And that's why I met with the small-business owners and listened to their concerns and heard their points of view. First, let me tell you the foundation for our economy is strong. I mean, after all, interest rates are low. Inflation is low. We've got the best workers in the world. Our productivity is high. We've got the best farmers and ranchers in the world. We're really good at a lot of things in America which creates the foundation for growth. I am not satisfied, however, until everybody can find work. And so, fundamentally, what can we do?

First, you've got to understand the role of Government is not to create wealth. It's to create an environment in which people can realize their dreams, in which small businesses can grow to be big businesses. And one way to encourage that is to let people keep more of their own money.

When we came in, it turns out the country was in a recession. That's three quarters of negative growth. Fortunately, I was able to team up with members of both political parties to take a chapter out of this textbook. It's the chapter that says, if you let people

keep more of their own money, they will demand a good or a service. And if they demand a good or a service, somebody is likely to produce that good or a service. And when somebody produces that good or a service, somebody is more likely to find work. The tax relief came at the right time for the American economy.

If you listen carefully to some of the dialog in Washington, you begin to hear a little tone about, "Well, maybe we ought to stop the tax relief from being fully implemented." That would be a mistake for our economy. That would be a terrible mistake for jobs and job creation. Not only should we resist anybody who wants to undo the tax relief, we need to make the tax relief permanent.

Well, people say, "How can cutting income taxes on the people affect small businesses?" Well, most small businesses are sole proprietorships, which means they pay tax at the individual income tax rate level. Or most small businesses are limited partnerships. And so when you cut the taxes on the people, you're really cutting the taxes on the sole proprietors and on limited partnerships. You're helping small business grow. And when small businesses grow, America is better off.

But let me also tell you that in the tax relief plan we began to mitigate the effects of the marriage penalty. Listen, the Tax Code ought to encourage marriage, not discourage marriage. And the other thing is we sent the death tax on the way to extinction. The death tax is bad for Kentucky farmers; it's bad for Kentucky ranchers; and it's bad for Kentucky entrepreneurs.

And then you say, "Well, why, Mr. President, do you need to talk about making the tax relief permanent?" Because a quirk in the law in the United States Senate says that you won't—we're going to cut your taxes, but in 10 years it will have come back. It's hard for me to explain. I mean, how can you say, "On the one hand, we're cutting your taxes, on the other hand, it goes away after 10 years?" Well, that's just the way the Senate happens to work right now. But there's a way to change that, and that is to get the United States Senate to agree to make all this tax relief permanent. It will help people plan. It will help good policy, and anybody who

wants to find work is more likely to be able to do so if the tax relief is permanent.

In order to make sure people find work and our economy is strong, Congress must not overspend. Every idea sounds like a good idea in Washington—just that they cost billions of dollars. We need to set priorities, and we have set priorities in Washington, priorities of how to make America safer, stronger, and better. And it's my job to hold the line on spending the people's money.

See, it's important to have the right mind-set up there. We're not spending Government money; we're spending your money. In order to make sure it's spent wisely—I look forward to working with Congress to make sure we spend your money wisely. If we overspend, it will serve as a drag on our economy. If we overspend, it will make it harder for people to find work. I'm worried about people finding work. I want anybody who wants a job to be able to find one here in America.

There's some other practical things we can do in Washington, DC. We need to get us a terrorism insurance bill, to get our hardhats back to work. Over \$10 billion of construction projects are not going forward because people can't get the proper insurance because of what the terrorists did to America. The Government ought to help here. It makes sense that the Government help. We want our hardhats back to working. The construction trades believe that over 300,000 workers will go back to work if we can get this bill out of Congress. I want a bill out of Congress that helps the hardhats, not helps the plaintiffs' attorneys. I want people going back to work in America.

We need an energy bill. A good energy bill will create jobs in America. We also need an energy bill which will encourage conservation and the use of renewable energy. We can do that, but we also need an energy bill that will encourage exploration here in America, exploration in environmentally friendly ways, so that we become less dependent on foreign sources of crude oil. An energy bill is good for jobs, and it's good for national security, and it's time the Congress quit talking and get an energy bill to my desk.

Now, I'm optimistic about our economy. I'm optimistic about job growth. I'm optimistic about the future because I understand America. We've got problems, no question, but we have a spirit that is indomitable and strong. I'm also optimistic about being able to do my most important job, which is to protect the homeland.

You know, one of my concerns was the farther we got away from September the 11th, the more likely it would be that some in our country might not think the enemy still existed. But they do, and they're nothing but a bunch of coldblooded killers. That's all they are. People in our country wonder why, why would somebody hate America? It's because we love freedom; that's why. We love the idea that free people can worship an almighty God any way they so choose in America. We value the freedom for people to speak their mind in this country. We value a free press. We value freedom. And the more we value freedom, the more they hate us. That's why. That's why the enemy still exists.

And there's another reason. Every life matters in America. Everybody counts. Everybody has worth. And these killers don't think that way. They're willing to take innocent life in the name of a hijacked religion. And so my job is to do everything we can to protect our homeland—it's to make America more secure.

You need to know there's a lot of good folks working hard to protect us. I mean, any time we're getting a hint that the enemy might be thinking about doing something to us, we're moving on it. We communicate better. We're aware. We're aware of their hatred. Prior to September the 11th, we would never assume that America would be a battlefield. It is now. It's a different era. I want you to know that you should take comfort in the fact that a lot of good people are doing everything they can to make sure that America is secure, not only at the Federal level but at the State level and here at the local level. A lot of really good people are getting better information and are acting on it as quickly as possible.

I went to Congress, and I said, in order to help me and future Presidents—and notice I say future Presidents, because I don't

think this war and this hatred is going to go away anytime soon—that future Presidents can deal with the threat on the homeland, I've asked for a new department in Washington called the Department of Homeland Security. The reason I did is because there's over 100 agencies in Washington, DC, that have something to do with protecting the homeland. They're scattered everywhere. In order to make sure the number one priority of these agencies is your protection, I've asked that they be put under one umbrella, one Cabinet Secretary to be confirmed by the United States Senate.

I want to be able to align authority and responsibility. I want to be able to say clearly to the American people, "We're doing a better job of protecting our borders." See, we need to know who's coming into America, what they're bringing into America, and whether or not they're going to leave America when they say they're going to leave America. We need to do a better job of coordinating our first—the strategy of our first-responders, the brave police and fire and EMS teams that you've got right here in Louisville and all across America. We need to do a better job of being able to respond to potential weapons of mass destruction attacks—need to do a better job of taking the intelligence we have and analyzing it and addressing the vulnerabilities that may be evident here in America.

And so I've asked Congress to act, and I appreciate the fact that the House of Representatives has acted. And I'm sure on your TV screens, if you bother to watch TV, you'll see that the Senate is debating this bill. I've got deep concerns about where the Senate is headed, however. I need the flexibility necessary to be able to move people to the right place at the right time in order to protect America. And I'll give you an example.

On our borders we've got three different agencies involved with protecting the border, Customs, INS, and Border Patrol. They wear different uniforms. They have different strategies. They've got different bosses. For the sake of protecting America, any administration must have the flexibility to move people around to address our vulnerabilities. The enemy moves quickly, and so should the Federal Government be able to move quickly.

And yet, the bill out of the Senate has got rules this thick. They want to micromanage the process. The Senate must hear this: I expect to get a bill that is not in the best interests of vested interests in Washington but in the best interests of protecting the American people. The best way to protect our homeland is to hunt the killers down, one by one, and bring them to justice. The best way to secure America—the best way to secure our country and to protect our freedom is to find the killers.

This is a different kind of war, but the war goes on. We've got some great veterans in this hall who remember the way war used to be. You could determine the size of the enemy based upon the number of tanks they might have or the number of airplanes they have or the number of ships. This is a different kind of enemy. These are commanders who hide in dark caves and then send youngsters to their suicidal death. They kind of slither into cities and hope not to get caught. They're sophisticated. They understand we're after them. And they're elusive, and they're determined. But so are we. We've got a fabulous United States military, and they're on the hunt. We've got a strong coalition of nations which have heard, as Anne mentioned, the doctrine that says, either you're with us or you're with the enemy. We have upheld the doctrine that says, if you harbor a terrorist, you're just as guilty as the terrorist.

And I want you to tell your youngsters, your children and your grandchildren, that when this great Nation went into Afghanistan, we didn't go to conquer anybody. We went in to liberate. We went in to liberate people from the clutches of the most barbaric regime in history. This great Nation and our friends and allies not only upheld an important doctrine, but as a result of our action, many young girls go to school for the first time in Afghanistan.

And we're not leaving. We believe so strongly that every individual counts, that we want to help democracy flourish in that region. And we're not leaving because there's still Al Qaida and their buddies roaming around. And there's a lot of brave folks on the hunt, probably some of your relatives. And if you've got a relative in the United

States military or if you're in the United States military, this Nation is incredibly proud of what your relative is doing.

I have submitted a defense spending bill that is the largest increase since Ronald Reagan was the President. And I did so for two reasons—two reasons: One, any time we put our troops into harm's way, they deserve the best pay, the best equipment, and the best training; and secondly, I did so because I want to send a message to friend and foe alike that we're in this deal for the long haul. When it comes to the freedoms we love, when it comes to something we hold dear, this country is determined and patient and plenty resolved to achieve victory.

Congress is back. The House passed a version of the defense bill. The Senate passed a version of the defense bill. I expect the Congress to work together and get that defense bill to my desk as soon as possible. It's in the interests of the United States. The American people are not going to like it if they see the Congress playing politics with the defense bill when we're at war.

We're making progress. See, because the enemy is different and the nature of the war is different, sometimes you don't see what's going on. As I said early on, and right after September the 11th, sometimes you'll see what's happening, and sometimes you won't. That's just the nature of this war. Sometimes one of these killers will be brought to justice, and you'll hear about it, and sometimes they won't. But we're making progress. Slowly but surely, we're making progress. Slowly but surely, we're bringing people to justice.

Notice I don't say, "Slowly but surely, we're seeking revenge." I said, "Slowly but surely, we're bringing people to justice." We owe that to our children. We owe that to our children's children. We must stay on the hunt for the sake of freedom here. We must continue to deny sanctuary. Once we get them on the run, we've also got to make it hard for them to light anywhere. We must make sure that those who would like to harbor them continue to get the message that there will be a consequence. We must anticipate problems before they occur. We must deal with threats to our security today, before it can be too late.

Yesterday I announced to the country that I would be working closely with our United States Congress and the American people to explain the threat that Saddam Hussein poses to world peace. I take the threat very seriously. I take the fact that he develops weapons of mass destruction very seriously. I remember the fact that he has invaded two countries before. I know for a fact that he's poisoned his own people. He doesn't believe in the worth of each individual. He doesn't believe in public dissent.

I look forward to a dialog. I'm a patient man. I've got tools—we've got tools at our disposal. And therefore, yesterday I began an important discussion about our future, about peace, about freedom; a discussion that I will continue to have with the United States Congress, Republican and Democrat alike; a discussion I will carry on with the American people; a discussion I will begin at the United Nations next week; a discussion I will have with the Prime Minister of Britain Saturday; a discussion I'll have with the Prime Minister of Canada on Monday; a discussion I'll be having with the President of Russia, Premier of China, President of France tomorrow.

I will remind them that history has called us into action, that we love freedom, that we'll be deliberate, patient, and strong in the values that we adhere to, but we can't let the world's worst leaders blackmail, threaten, hold freedom-loving nations hostage with the world's worst weapons.

I can't imagine what went through the enemy's mind when they hit us. I can't imagine what they were thinking. Let me guess. They probably said, America is so selfish and so self-absorbed and so materialistic, that after September the 11th we might file a lawsuit or two, but that's all we would do. They were wrong. See, they don't understand America. They don't understand our character, and they don't understand our fiber. They don't understand that, when we love something, we love it dearly. We love life, and we love freedom.

And they understand one thing about us, too. When we need to be plenty tough, we're going to be plenty tough. And they're learning another thing about America. When we need to be compassionate and loving, we can be compassionate and loving, too. You see,

I believe out of the evil done to America—and make no mistake, it was an incredibly evil act—will come incredible good. You need to tell your loved ones, the little ones in particular, that when they hear the President talking about Al Qaida, Iraq, and other places, I do so because I long for peace. See, I believe out of the evil done to America, if we're strong and focused and determined, we can achieve peace. We can not only achieve peace today for America but peace in the long term—but not only for America. See, every life matters in this country. And you don't have to be an American for you to matter, as far as this Nation is concerned. We want peace in parts of the world that have quit on peace. We want there to be peace in the Middle East. We want there to be peace in South Asia. We act because we believe in peace. And out of the evil done to America can come a more peaceful world.

And out of the evil done to America can come a more compassionate America, too. A lot of people say, "Well, what can I do on the war against terror?" You can love your neighbor like you'd like to be loved yourself, is what you can do.

No, I'm for a safer and strong America, and I'm for a better America. A better America begins, by the way, with making sure every child gets an education in this country and no child is left behind. A better America is when we take care of people who can't help themselves with a health care system that's modern. A better America is one that calls upon the best of America. See, Government can hand out money—we do a pretty good job of it. But what Government cannot do is put hope into people's hearts or a sense of purpose in people's lives. That's done when a loving individual puts his arm around a fellow citizen and says, "I love you. What can I do to help you?"

You see, America is changing, one person at a time—one person at a time. We're saving America one soul, one conscience at a time, because thousands of our fellow citizens have recognized it's important to serve something greater than yourself.

Robert Mihalovic is here. I met two groups of people—I met one group of people, and I met one person. I met Robert. I also met the Louisville Little League team, both kind

of heroes in their own way. One group of kids won a championship. I did remind them, it's just beginning for you. You've got a responsibility now that you're champs, a responsibility to make the right choices in life.

Robert is here—Robert, if you don't mind standing up—I'll tell you why Robert is here. He's a Navy World War II veteran. He's a Korean war veteran. But let me tell you something about him. He mentors children. See, he's decided that in order to make a difference, in order to be a patriot, he wants to help a child in need. Robert told me at Air Force One that his most beautiful moments come when the child hugs him and says, "Thank you," when the child says, "Thanks for giving me some hope, and thanks for giving me love."

No Government program can do that. It happens because thousands of citizens like Robert, who I call soldiers in the armies of compassion, have heard the call to love their neighbor like they'd like to be loved themselves. One person, one Robert can't do everything, but he can do something. He can help change America, one heart, one soul at a time.

The enemy hit us. They did tremendous evil to America. But out of that evil is going to come a more compassionate country. We can deal with addiction and hopelessness and despair when our fellow citizens answer the call to make America a compassionate and a decent place. And that's what's happening in this country. It's happening in America. No, out of the evil done to America is going to come incredible good—peace and a better society, because we're the greatest Nation, full of the greatest people on the face of the Earth.

Thank you for coming. God bless. God bless America.

NOTE: The President spoke at 11:40 a.m. in the Broadbent Arena at the Kentucky Fair and Exposition Center. In his remarks, he referred to Representative Anne M. Northup of Kentucky, who introduced the President; Gov. Paul Patton of Kentucky, and his wife, Judi; President Saddam Hussein of Iraq; Prime Minister Tony Blair of the United Kingdom; Prime Minister Jean Chretien of Canada; President Vladimir Putin of Russia; President Jiang Zemin of China; and President Jacques Chirac of France. The Office of the Press

Secretary also released a Spanish language transcript of these remarks.

Remarks at a Luncheon for Representative Anne M. Northup in Louisville

September 5, 2002

I want to thank you all. Thanks for coming. I'm really honored to have been invited back to Louisville by Anne to help in her reelection effort. She is a incredibly—she is a breath of fresh air in Washington, let me put it to you that way. She's honest. She's open. The thing I love about Anne is her heart. It is as big as Texas. *[Laughter]* She cares deeply about her fellow citizens.

You see, what we need in the political process is people who put the people ahead of partisanship. They put people's concerns and hopes and aspirations ahead of personal success—their own personal success.

See, I love the idea that this is a soul who is willing to work in neighborhoods where somebody might not have ever voted for her. She's not the kind of citizen who said, "Did you vote for me," and therefore, "I'm going to help you." She's the kind of citizen who says, "I'm honored to be in the position I'm in, and what can I do to make Kentucky, and Louisville, Kentucky, as hopeful a place for every citizen?" Anne Northup deserves to be reelected to the United States Congress.

I value her advice. I value her friendship. I value being able to work with her to do what's right for America. I also like the fact that she loves her family. She's got her priorities straight. She loves Woody, and she loves her kids. I love the fact that Anne is an adopted mom. It shows something special about her heart and her willingness to love. I enjoyed meeting her mother and dad. She probably listens to her mother about as much as I do—listen to mine. *[Laughter]* But she is—she's got her priorities straight, her faith and her family and the people of Louisville, Kentucky.

So I want to thank you all for coming to help this good lady. I want to thank you for contributing, and I urge you to contribute your time. It's—this fundraiser is going to be history in about 30 minutes, or if I keep